

Top Secret 219

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Saturday September 3, 1977

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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

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State Dept. review completed

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Saturday, 3 September 1977.

The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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PALESTINIANS-USSR: Visit

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[redacted] Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat presumably discussed the key issue of Palestinian acceptance of UN Resolution 242 during his visit to Moscow this week, but there is little information on his talks.

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[redacted] The final communique talked about PLO participation at a Geneva conference but omitted the usual insistence that the PLO be present "from the very beginning." The Soviets may have again raised the idea of a two-stage Geneva conference at which the Palestinians would be represented only during the second stage.

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[redacted] The announcement at the end of Arafat's visit noted that the two sides had a "thorough exchange of views," an apparent indication the PLO and Soviets continue to differ on some issues. The Soviets and Palestinians did agree in condemning the idea of negotiating through a series of smaller working groups, calling it an effort to exclude them. Soviet media have previously expressed suspicions that the exclusion of the USSR from any talks may be a US goal; the repetition of this theme during Arafat's visit underlines the depth of the Soviet concern.

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SPAIN: Government Crisis

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[Redacted] Widespread press reports of serious rifts within Spain's ruling Union of the Democratic Center Party and of a government crisis in the offing appear to be overdrawn.

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[Redacted] Prime Minister Suarez returned yesterday from a tour of five West European capitals--during which he received warm support for Spain's recent bid for EC membership--amid a groundswell of rumors that a cabinet shuffle is imminent. The rumors have been fueled by unsubstantiated reports of dissension with Suarez' Democratic Center.

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[Redacted] Suarez welded the 12 disparate factions of his centrist electoral alliance into a single party less than a month ago, and rivalries undoubtedly persist. We have no reason to believe, however, that the rifts are serious or that Suarez cannot repair them.

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[Redacted] The current outburst of media criticism and speculation reflects growing dissatisfaction in Spain over the apparent inability of Suarez in particular and democracy in general to provide a quick solution for deep-seated economic, political, and social difficulties. Unless Suarez and his minority government begin to produce results soon on key economic and regional problems, pressures to form a coalition government with the Socialists are certain to grow. *[Redacted]*

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BRIEFS

Libya:

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[] Libyan President Qadhafi's speech Thursday commemorating the eighth anniversary of the Libyan revolution focused on his country's accomplishments and on consolidating political gains he has achieved in his continuing dispute with Egypt.

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[] In discussing Egypt, Qadhafi avoided extreme rhetoric, by Libyan standards, and again portrayed Libya as the aggrieved party in the recent dispute between the two countries. He said the recent border clashes were a tragedy for both the Libyan and Egyptian people that was caused by an unnamed "criminal," an obvious reference to Egyptian President Sadat.

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[] On Middle East issues, Qadhafi declared his unswerving support for those Arabs and Palestinians who reject peace negotiations with Israel. He appealed for greater Arab unity and warned against a US-Israeli conspiracy to destroy Arab military power. Qadhafi claimed that the presence of the Syrian army in Lebanon and of Egypt's forces along Libya's border resulted from this conspiracy.

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[] Qadhafi criticized the US, but did not mention the USSR or Cuba. []

Netherlands:

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[] The three parties involved in the bargaining to form a government in the Netherlands--Labor, Christian Democratic Appeal, and Democrats '66--reached a compromise on the abortion issue yesterday, and cleared the way for a continuation of their negotiations. This will be their third attempt to agree on a program of government. Caretaker Prime Minister den Uyl has twice informed Queen Juliana since the elections on 25 May that talks were deadlocked. Both times a mediator managed to work out a compromise.

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[] Several issues remain to be resolved, including those concerning defense spending and nuclear policy, before a coalition pact can be completed. []

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Zaire-US:

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[] The Mobutu regime is concerned about the negative impact on US-Zairian relations of the recent arrest of ex-Foreign Minister Nguza shortly after he had completed an official visit to Washington. President Mobutu is sensitive to foreign reactions to his recent purge of Nguza and other officials and is aware of the need for cordial relations with the US and other states that support Zaire economically.

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[] In a meeting on Wednesday, Foreign Minister Umba di Lutete assured the US Ambassador that Nguza would be tried by a civilian court in full compliance with Zairian law. The minister stressed that Nguza's arrest was in no way an indication of a deterioration in Zairian-US relations. []

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